

Collaborative Competence in Pre-Service Teacher Training: A Team Teaching Experience

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After many years implementing bilingual programs nationwide, there is still a great need for initial teacher training in CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) (Coyle et al., 2010; Escobar, 2011; Madrid & Pérez Cañado, 2012). In Madrid, roughly 50% of primary and secondary schools offer bilingual education based on this approach. Thus, new initial teacher training programs should consider the effective training of teachers in CLIL (Fenández, Aguirre & Harris, 2013). In this context, one of the most important teaching competences is the collaborative competence (Pérez Cañado, 2017; Bertaux et al., 2010). CLIL teachers should develop teamwork skills in order to coordinate with the different agents at school, including language assistants, co-teachers and teachers of other subjects.

Co-teaching in a teacher education program may help to reduce the theory–practice gap, to improve reflective practice in the classroom, and to develop further teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (Murphy & Martin, 2015). This paper describes an experience of collaborative teaching in the context of a course on CLIL taught to 4th year teacher trainees at Universidad Pontificia Comillas throughout one semester. Whereas it is relatively common to have two or more lecturers teach different modules of a course, the course design described here made a priority to have two teachers co-leading most of the sessions of the course, as a model of the kind of collaborative teaching that trainees will have to develop in CLIL settings in infant and primary education.

We will reflect on the rationale for such a teaching model, the main teacher roles involved, and the coordination challenges that must be faced in order to maximize student learning. A tentative assessment of the experience will also be provided, using information obtained from student performance in the course (formative and summative assessment tasks) as well as student feedback in the middle and at the end of the semester.

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